

COOK INLET AREA

PROPOSAL F2003-8

Existing regulation: Cook Inlet Area - Shellfish

No regulations presently.

Proposed regulation: Cook Inlet Area

COOK INLET AREA - Shellfish - No subsistence.

COOK INLET AREA, Tuxedni Bay - All shellfish - Residents of Chisik Island and Tuxedni Bay.

*Clams - Polly Creek and Crescent River drainage
No limit*

April 1 - December 31

Tanner and Dungeness Crab - The daily harvest and possession limit is 12 male Tanner crabs per person. Only crabs with a shell width of 5½ inches or greater may be taken or possessed. You may not use more than five crab pots to take Tanner crabs.

Reason for changing the regulation: I propose that the Cook Inlet Area shellfish be amended to include the subsistence taking of clams and crab in the waters adjacent to Chisik Island and Duck Island permitted by local rural residence. Regulations should read similar to the commercial use does for the Polly Creek and Crescent River drainage. Subsistence use should not be limited to zero when commercial operation has no bag limit and no Harvest limitations. With a large commercial interest (continuous digging the entire summer when tides permit by 20 - 30 persons from L-48 living camped at the grounds getting at times 14 buckets per tide per person) and a small subsistence interest (one or two people digging 1 bucket of clams 5-10 times a season) it stands to reason the resource will not be effected by such a small take.

Effect of change on fish or shellfish populations:

Effect of change on subsistence users:

Communities which have used this resource: Customary and Traditional Use Determination should be changed for this area in specific. Communities that use these resources are the families living at Chisik Island and also Tuxedni Bay. My parents who are buried at Chisik did use them and those subsistence uses qualified my mother for her primary place of residency from ANILCA on Chisik that I inherited and share with my brother and sisters. Our children are currently users of these resources as well. My father held a permit from the Park allowing him to hunt there as a local rural resident. Hank Kroll who has a homestead in Tuxedni Bay and acquired it through his parents similarly but not a Native primary place of residency also uses these resources as his parents did before him.

Where the resource has been harvested:

When the resource has been harvested: Seasons of use are customarily during the spring and summer months. Winter harvest is unduly harsh and difficult. However cockle shells can be collected on good days. And razor clams also when warm and safe enough to attempt the task. Much more common is the use of warm summer days to collect with ease what is needed for eating. Processing what is easily collected by way of a pressure cooker ensures no spoilage until springtime brings fresh goods. Spruce boughs are put out in the spring for herring to spawn eggs on. Salmon show up in May and provide delicious fresh meat which is pressure cooked fresh or smoked and pressure cooked. Clams are easily harvested in May and juicy and fat in early spring these are pressure cooked for storage and also frozen. Seaweed is dried for storage with and without herring spawn.

Additional Information: Additional information about trends for this area are mostly what I have observed with commercial harvests. From 1970 to now the clam harvest has not had a limitation or bag limit placed on it for those clams harvested to sell for profit that I am aware of. I have visited and learned from the commercial diggers how to dig and where to dig and how not to break clams and what the most buckets dug in a tide has been. (14 buckets) It does surprise me that the beds can withstand the use of season after season of digging without an impact or decline. I would propose that if there were a decline that the commercial harvest be modified in some way to alleviate the impact and subsistence users not be the first to be cut off. Not that one use takes precedence but that the “for profit” and “commercial gain” be first to adjust when a resource is threatened for the sake of the resource. Subsistence use comprises such a fraction of the whole use when compared to commercial and sport the impact is inconsequential.

Proposed by: Machel Haynes, Soldotna (Chisik Island)